

O D E

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

L O R D M E L T O N.

by Eliza Ryves

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

L O R D M E L T O N,

INFANT SON OF EARL FITZWILLIAM.

MELTON

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

M,DCC,LXXXVII.

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MELTON, a muse by great ambition fir'd
For fame's high goal to plume her tow'ring wing,
And leave to slaves, by lust of gold inspir'd,
The spoils which flatt'ry and which falsehood bring;
Thus in glad pæans, round thy cradle pour'd,
Breathes the pure strains of her prophetic song,
To hail, with prescient joy, the bright accord
Of all that to the great, the good, belong,
When to the world, like some fair garland twin'd
With flowers of loveliest bloom, shines forth thy manly mind.

There soft humanity, which marks the tear;
 Deep sorrow's mute yet eloquent appeal;
 There mild benevolence, from fortune's sphere,
 Which bends benignant ev'ry woe to heal;
 There bounty, pouring wide a copious stream
 From the rich store of her capacious urn;
 And spreading round hope's animating beam
 Thro' haunts where slighted genius pin'd forlorn;
 And there the patriot's temper'd fires shall glow,
 O'er virtue's op'ning germs a richer tint to throw.

Nor deem the muse, who thro' the veil of time
 Thus darts her Sybil glance, by hope betray'd;
 For not on Fancy's dreams she builds her rhyme,
 But truth's thro' beings varying forms display'd.—
 Heirs not the racer all his lineal speed?
 Burns not the war-horse with paternal fires?
 So to the progeny of man's decreed
 To boast th' inherent virtues of his fires:
 And hence, in confidence of nature's laws,
 My song, with bold presage, thy portrait, Melton, draws.

Yes, thou shalt shine, as shone those chiefs allied
 To either parent's high patrician name,
 Whose end was freedom, justice still their guide,
 And public happiness their gen'rous aim;
 When rising in their country's cause they stood,
 Impell'd by motives to the base unknown,
 Stemming, with patient steps, corruption's flood,
 From Rome's fell yoke to free the British throne;
 And, by the crush of Stewart's priest-form'd scheme,
 Bid liberty's bright rays from Nassau's banners beam.

Nor less illustrious * HE of later days,
 Whose steady soul the same fair track pursu'd;
 Who sought no meed but Britain's weal to raise,
 Or knew a wish but for his country's good.
 Lamented Wentworth!—Yes, the praise be thine
 Which waits those virtues form'd to bless a state;
 Praise which survives the adamant shrine,
 Trophy'd with all the pageants of the great;
 And deep on mem'ry's living page records
 Those deeds which crown the good with heaven's sublime rewards.

* The late Marquis of Rockingham.

But why, my muse, with retrospective glance,
 Turn'st thou thy ling'ring eye? E'en now behold
 'Round freedom's standard many a chief advance,
 Whose names shall shine amidst their fires enroll'd;
 Tho' storms of faction rouse not full to view
 That active flame of patriotic zeal,
 Which Sydney, which immortal Ruffel drew,
 Low on the deadly block their faith to seal;
 When the prompt minions of a despot lord
 To murd'rous axes turn'd the law's perverted sword.

Wake then, my lyre, each slumb'ring chord arouse,
 To hail the patriots who around thee throng;
 And while thou deck'st with wreaths their honour'd brow,
 Build on their fame the glory of thy song.
 Behold bright rising to adorn the strain,
 From martyr'd Ruffel's godlike lineage sprung,
 On power's base panders scowling fixt disdain,
 Young Bedford stands his kindred chiefs among:
 Like Jove's own bird, resoly'd sublime to trace
 The paths his fires pursued, and prove his patriot race.

Nor singly he of that illustrious line

The old hereditary fame maintains :

Ca'ndish, * in whom the mingling streams combine

Which flow'd from Ruffel's and from Devon's veins,

Thou, like the heroes to thy blood ally'd,

Tho' indolent awhile thy genius rest,

With zeal inspir'd by freedom's virtuous pride,

Would to the storm oppose thy dauntless breast,

Should the swoln fury of o'erwhelming power

In clouds of dread portent around thy country lower.

Mark, too, resolved and steady to his trust,

In Britain's senate † Montagu remains ;

Who, fixt, not sway'd by passions wavering gust,

A patriot's part with manly zeal sustains.

Impartial, candid, and in judgment clear ;

Whene'er he rises adverse factions lend

Attention to the truths they dread to hear,

And stand abash'd before the nation's friend ;

Who speaks, who acts, on virtue's public plan,

Whether he guilt arraigns, or pleads the rights of man.

* Lord John Cavendish.

† The Right Honourable Frederick Montagu.

With these in friendship, as in freedom's cause,
 Portland, united stands thy honour'd name;
 A name might rival * Theron's great applause,
 Glow'd my rude numbers with a Pindar's flame:
 Since form'd alike in councils to prelude,
 Or in the scenes of social life to shine,
 'Tis thine with temperate hand the helm to guide,
 To awe the bad, and charm the virtuous thine;
 And by thy patriot deeds deserve renown,
 Than delphic wreaths more bright or Agragantum's crown.

- * ————— " No state, revolving o'er
 " The long memorials of recorded days,
 " Can show in all her boasted store
 " A name to parallel thy Theron's praise;
 " One to the acts of friendship so inclin'd,
 " So fam'd for virtuous deeds and love of human kind.
 " Yet hath obdurate envy sought to drown
 " The goodly music of his sweet renown;
 " While, by some frantic spirits born along
 " To mad attempts of violence and wrong,
 " She turn'd against him faction's raging flood,
 " And strove by evil deeds to conquer good."

West's Translation of Pindar's second Olympic Ode.

Besb'rough, mild Nestor of our northern sphere,

Yet livest thou, with years, with honour crown'd;

To friends, to children, to thy country dear,

With not one foe thine evening peace to wound!

Oh! like some patriarch of those golden times,

When social angels deign'd to visit earth,

And in sweet converse paint the radiant climes,

Where mounts the soul at nature's second birth,

Long may'st thou shine amidst thy rising race,

And shew how virtue charms in age's mellowing grace.

Late too—Ah why must sorrow's chilling dews

Hang their dull mists ungenial round my lyre?

Why the dark yew its somb'rous gloom diffuse,

And shroud my brow with grief's funereal tire?

But such the doom of heaven! For man decreed

The cup of bliss unmingled seldom flows;

As seldom from affliction's chalice drain'd,

Streams the crude draught full drugg'd with cureless woes;

Save when, to form a lesson for mankind,

The storms of fate are loof'd to prove th' heroic mind.

Not such, lamented * youth, thy rigid fate!

When slowly ling'ring on the sickly bed,
Hope, sweetest foothold, at thy pillow fate,

While nine revolving moons their circuit lead.
At length the truth for which affection yearn'd

Flow'd on thine ear in strains of natal joy,
And life's spent lamp with transient vigour burn'd,

To pour down blessings on the welcome boy;
Then, in the fullness of content, thy soul
Wing'd her exulting flight to heaven's immortal goal.

But whither roves my song? The mournful lay

Due to the honour'd manes of the dead,
The weeping muse some future hour may pay,

In cypress veiling her dejected head.
Now swiftly borne from woe's afflicted choir,

Who bend, slow dirging, o'er the recent tomb,
To happier themes she dedicates her lyre,

And round her brow bids festal roses bloom,
As through the deepening chords her hand she flings,

And to Fitzwilliam's praise awakes the sounding strings.

* The late honourable George Fitzwilliam, who died immediately after receiving the news of his nephew's (Lord Melton's) birth.

Yes, Melton, yes, the fire who gave thee birth
High in the patriot constellation shines;
Great heir of Rockingham's exalted worth,
Whose mind like his each manly grace combines.
Judgment unwarp'd, integrity of soul,
Candour, revolting at deception's name,
And honour, spurning int'rest's base control,
Form the pure rays of his refulgent fame:
Rays which out lustre every sparkling gem,
From rifled India torn to deck a diadem.

Thus parented, not long in tame repose
Shall rest, bright babe, thy mind's inherent pow'rs;
But soon the germs of lineal worth disclose
A golden promise of maturer hours.
And as the beams of reason, dawning fair,
Give the sweet hope of her meridian reign,
Thine be, Fitzwilliam, with a father's care,
In thy own paths his docile youth to train;
Till by thy precepts, thy example taught,
To virtue's gen'rous aims each glowing passion's brought.

Nor lose the hour of childhood's candid morn,
 On the blank tablet of the mind to trace
 Those moral truths which best the man adorn,
 And lend to silver age a Besb'rough's grace.
 For as light lines, on tender bark impress'd,
 Expand and deepen as the sapling thrives,
 So truth, once grav'd on youth's retentive breast,
 The wreck of time and passion's rage survives,
 And if the frolic heart deluded stray,
 She back to virtue's paths will guide the wanderer's way.

Nor here, Fitzwilliam, be thy task confin'd;
 But early train him to those arduous toils,
 Which ask that rectitude, that force of mind,
 No influence misleads, no danger foils;
 That when in judgment ripe, as ripe in age,
 With soul high panning for a world's applause,
 Resolv'd, he treads the senate's glorious stage,
 A firm supporter of his country's cause,
 Each nervous argument may full reveal
 The statesman's depth of thought, the patriot's glowing zeal.

So as when Fox, with Demosthenean fire,

Th' invaded rights of Britain boldly pleads;

So as when Burke, with Tully's noble ire,

Drags forth to public view a Hastings' deeds,

And, though loud uproar shake th' insulted dome,

To make of justice and of faith a jest,

Full brings the wrongs of ravag'd India home

To every feeling, every honest breast:

Brings them, with zeal unaw'd by power or gold,

And bids truth's candid tongue each impious deed unfold.

Oh glorious chiefs, transcendently renown'd!

Rome had for yo^u the trophy'd column rear'd,

Around your brows her civic garlands bound,

And hail'd as heroes, or as gods rever'd:

But shame to Britain, for whose rights yo^u plead,

Shame which th' indignant muse must blushing tell,

Ingrate she proves! Yet your's the nobler meed,

The soul-exalting joy of acting well!

Joy which out beams the bliss that triumph brings

To conqu'ror's cro wn'd with spoils, or pow'r-usurping kings.

Such is the prize, and not the gauds of state,
Or the short sunshine of a monarch's smile,
That true ambition seeks, sublimely great,
Through tracks, high born, impervious to the vile;
Glory is her's, and that resplendent crown,
Which, nor can envy blight, or time impair,
Then, Melton, learn to look superior down
On fortune's toys, or favour's transient glare,
For, trust my song, (what else the boast of power)
Who wins immortal fame on virtue's wing, must tower.

Of glorious chiefs, transcendent renown'd!
Rome had for ye the trophy'd column rear'd,
Around your brows her civic garlands bound,
And hail'd as heroes, or as gods rever'd:
But shame to Britain, for whoe'er ye lead,
Shame which th' indignant multitude would bleed;
Ingrate the prove! Yet 88 Yr 23
The soul-exalting joy of acting well!
Joy which our hearts the bliss that triumph brings
To conquerors, sure will with souls, or how's-rising king.